



Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce

August 31, 2011

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: In the Matter of applications of AT&T Inc. and Deutsche Telekom AG for consent to assign or Transfer Control of licenses and Authorizations - (WT Proceeding 11-65).

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce to express our endorsement of the proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile USA.

Our communities are located in the Sandhills Region of North Carolina, which roughly places us in the center of the state. We are 100 miles from the metro regions of Charlotte and Raleigh.

Our region is made up of a diversified economic base – everything from agriculture to manufacturing and small business to Fortune 500. The region is home to several higher education institutions including Richmond Community College, St. Andrews Presbyterian College and the University of North Carolina-Pembroke, as well as what we feel is the best healthcare system in the southeast, Scotland Healthcare.

However, Scotland County has the highest unemployment rate in the state. We have been seeking ways to improve our rural broadband network to help increase local job opportunities.

This merger proposal may be one of the best answers to our challenge. If approved, it would widely deploy AT&T's 4G LTE mobile broadband network throughout the nation and increase coverage in rural areas and small towns. Access to mobile broadband is seen as an essential tool in job growth. Access to 4G networks like AT&T's could have a great effect on employment opportunities, especially amongst low-income populations, because mobile devices are more affordable and familiar than desktops.



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Our organization is of the mindset that mergers like the one before the Commission help close the digital divide between metropolitan and rural areas in America. The nation should embrace companies' desires to make their services more widely available to consumers of all incomes and geographic locations.

We hope the FCC moves forward to enable the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile USA to occur so that counties like Scotland can reap the benefits of our digital economy.

Sincerely,

Dolores "Dee" A. Hammond
Chairman of the Board
Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce

cc: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell